

Will the broadcast flag interfere with consumers ability to make copies of DTV content for their personal use, either on personal video recorders or removable media?

The proposed broadcast flag will interfere with my rights, as a citizen, to make fair personal use of broadcast material. The DMCA has already placed a choke hold on fair use of published material. Do not further cut off the air of freedom by implementing this restriction.

Would the digital flag interfere with consumers ability to send DTV content across networks, such as home digital networks connecting digital set top boxes, digital recorders, digital servers and digital display devices?

Any built-in hardware restriction on such as the broadcast flag will adversely impact consumer's ability to interconnect their own equipment. I have worked with hardware, its associated hardware, and making it all work together for my entire professional life (20 years) as a practicing high energy physicist (experimental). Contentions that the proposed flag will NOT adversely impact the home consumer are hogwash.

Would the broadcast flag requirement limit consumers ability to use their existing electronic equipment (equipment not built to look for the flag) or make it difficult to use older components with new equipment that is compliant with the broadcast flag standard?

Interconnecting with older equipment is always a dicey proposition. I have seen the best intentions in this area go awry. Adding built-in restrictions to new equipment, in my experience, nearly guarantees the new equipment will not properly work with older equipment. Consumers by and large are not millionaires. My family had our original TV for 15 years, and I only traded in the set I got when I married after that same length of time. The broadcast flag in this context will be a travesty, harming the consumers the FCC should instead protect.

Would a broadcast flag requirement limit the development of future equipment providing consumers with new options?

How can a restrictive flag NOT limit the development of future equipment? It is a bald faced lie to pretend it will not. Once such a flag is in place, and in the market, you will have to work with it for the next 20 years. See my comments above on this time scale.

What will be the cost impact, if any, that a broadcast flag requirement would have on consumer electronics equipment?

The immediate cost will be the forcing of consumers to purchase new equipment, if they want to be able to receive new content. This is a potentially tremendous, and adverse impact on the spending patterns of individual consumers. There is no justification for the draconian protection of a few companies at the cost it will extract from consumers.

Other Comments:

The DMCA has gone too far. Constitutionally protected free speech is already impacted because the mere threat of action

against an ISP by a company which doesn't like what it reads is now sufficient cause for the removal of that content. Are we children, that we have to be protected from owning hardware which could hurt us? Or are we free citizens of a great country, able to make responsible decisions without being told what they are? If there are violations of copyright laws, then put teeth into their prosecution. But don't kick the small consumers just because they are an easier target.